

## — America's Best Kept Secret —

# The United States Merchant Marine Academy

By Eileen S. Roberson  
Associate Administrator for Administration

The United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) is one of America's best-kept secrets! One of five federal service academies, it is an accredited four-year institution that awards Bachelor of Science degrees to its graduates.

Operated by the Maritime Administration (MARAD) and located in Kings Point, New York, the Academy educates and trains professional U.S. merchant marine officers to serve America's economic and national defense interests. Students major in Marine Transportation, Maritime Operations and Technology, Logistic and Intermodal Transportation, Marine Engineering, Marine Engineering Systems, Marine Engineering and Shipyard Management, and Dual Licensing. Upon graduation, they receive a merchant marine officer's license from the U.S. Coast Guard. Graduates are also commissioned as reserve officers in any branch of the armed forces, with an option to pursue an active-duty commission. The entire Regiment of Midshipmen is generally about 950, of which 225 students are at sea (sea duty/sea year) at any given time during the year. The average size of the incoming class at Kings Point is about 275 students.

One of the challenges facing MARAD is minority representation at the USMMA. Based on recent Academy class enrollment statistics from 2005 through 2008, a total of 141 women have been recruited, which represents 14 percent of the total midshipmen on board, and 89 minorities, which represents 9 percent. The Academy's Admissions Office is aggressively pursuing recruitment strategies to increase women and minority representation. Some of these activities included: produced a new brochure mailed to 20,000 high-school women with strong SAT scores; mailed promotional information to 24,000 highly qualified minority students; and sponsored students to attend the prep-school programs at New Mexico Military Institute.

There has been regular attendance at recruitment events such as the West Point-sponsored JROTC Jamborees in Atlanta, Chicago, Memphis, and Philadelphia, as well as the National Heritage and Diversity College Admissions Expo in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.



At MARAD headquarters, a number of efforts are being spearheaded to educate and publicize the USMMA and recruit a diverse pool of applicants. Tracey L. Ford, one of MARAD's 2004-2006 Transportation Leadership Program participants, will be visiting a number of Washington, D.C., metropolitan-area schools and college fairs to increase public awareness and diversity representation at the Academy.

## Upcoming Events

Containerization and Intermodal Institute  
2004 Connie Awards Honoring Nicola Arena and Charles Raymond  
Newark, NJ  
December 9, 2004  
(732) 817-9131

World Research Group  
Maritime Port and Cargo Security Summit  
San Diego, CA  
January 25-26, 2005  
[www.worldrg.com](http://www.worldrg.com)

If you know of an upcoming event you would like published in the *MARAD Update*, please submit it to Ella Thomas at [ella.thomas@marad.dot.gov](mailto:ella.thomas@marad.dot.gov).